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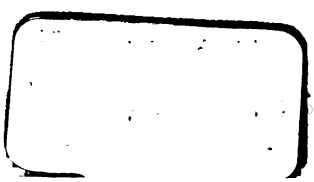

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MEMOIR

OF

WILLIAM ROSCOE.

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MEMOIR

OF

WILLIAM ROSCOE,

BY

DR. THOMAS STEWART TRAILL,

F.R.S.E. &c.

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TO THE

FRIENDS AND ADMIRERS OF

WILLIAM ROSCOE,

ASSEMBLED

TO COMMEMORATE THE

Centenary

OF HIS BIRTH,

THIS EDITION OF THE MEMOIR,

BY DR. TRAILL,

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

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NOTICE.

THE Publishers of this little Work felt that they could not allow the celebration of the Centenary of the birth of ROSCOE to take place without contributing their mite to testify their admiration of the man who shed so great a lustre on his native town, and, connected as their house was, (in however humble a degree,) with him, as the printers of one of his greatest works, they thought they could not better effect their purpose than by presenting his assembled friends and admirers, on the day of the Centenary Festival, with a reprint of Dr. Traill's elegant Memoir of the great Historian's life, originally read by that learned Professor at a meeting of the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society, in 1831, and afterwards published in Jameson's Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal, of 1832.

The Publishers beg to convey to Dr. Traill, and the proprietors of the above Journal, their thanks for their kind and ready permission to reprint this memoir.

19, TITHEBARN STREET,
LIVERPOOL, *8th March*, 1853.

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MEMOIR

OF

WILLIAM ROSCOE.

"Clarorum Virorum facta moresque posteris tradere, antiquitus usitatum, ne nostris quidem temporibus, quanquam incuriosa suorum, ætas omisit, quotiens magna aliqua ac nobilis virtus vicit ac supergressa est vitium, parvis magnisque Civitatibus commune, ignorantiam recti et invidiam."—TACITI *Vita Agricolæ*.

IN the sentence now quoted, Tacitus has justly indicated the true objects of biography; and, although in this humble notice of our late illustrious President*, I do not profess the intention of handing down his character and virtues to posterity (a task fortunately confided to abler hands), yet I feel satisfied that this attempt will not be displeasing to a Society of which he was at once the ornament and the head. As our age cannot be justly accused of want of curiosity respecting our contemporaries, it does not deserve to be characterized as ignorant or envious of merit. If, in tracing the career of Mr. Roscoe, we find him rising, by his own exertions, from obscurity to eminence, that age and that country have some claims to

* Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society.

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commendation in which the force of genius can overcome the obstacles of birth and fortune, and elevate its possessor to the society of the noblest and wisest of the land.

William Roscoe was born on the 8th of March, 1753, in the *Old Bowling-green House*, in Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, which is well known to many persons by the engraving from a drawing by Austin. His parents, in humble but comfortable circumstances, were little able to advance his education ; yet, anxious for his improvement, at the age of six they sent him to a school, kept by a Mr. Martin, for the elementary instruction of children ; whence, in about two years, he was removed to the seminary of Mr. Sykes, at that time a considerable private school in Liverpool.

The instruction which young Roscoe here received was confined to English reading, writing, arithmetic and the elements of geometry. At the age of twelve years he left school, from which period he may be said to have been, in a great measure, his own instructor, until about the age of sixteen, when he was articled as clerk to Mr. John Eyes, a respectable attorney in this town. During the four years that elapsed between his leaving school and entering Mr. Eyes's office, he occupied himself with desultory English reading, in cultivating some fields rented by his father, and in frequenting the painting room of a porcelain manufactory in the neighbourhood, where he amused himself with painting on china.

At that period of his life his English reading appears to have been rather confined. His favourite

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authors were Shakspeare, Shenstone, the poems of Mrs. Catharine Philips, and the Spectator. From the former he imbibed a decided predilection for poetry, and his taste for English composition was probably modelled on the elegant examples contained in the latter. It is curious to trace his attachment to botany and the fine arts to this early period. The phenomena of vegetation, and the cultivation of plants, appear to have made a deep impression on his youthful mind; and in the little cultivator of his father's fields we can trace the embryo botanist, to whose ardent enthusiasm in after years, *we* owe our botanic garden, *the world* the new arrangement of Scitamineæ, and the superb botanical publication on the same beautiful order of plants. The early essays in painting china-ware seem also to have first inspired him with a love of the fine arts, and drew him on to cultivate his taste in the arts of design, in which he not only displayed the knowledge of an intelligent amateur, but such practical proficiency as might have led to eminence, had his genius not been directed to other channels, as several slight but spirited etchings by his hand, yet in existence, amply testify.

The rudiments of Latin he acquired between the age of sixteen and twenty, by his own unassisted efforts, though at a later period he read several of the best Latin authors in company with his friends the late William Clarke and Richard Lowndes, two young men of Liverpool, equally intent with himself on mental improvement.

I may here mention, it was not until a comparatively later period of his life, and, if I mistake not,

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after the publication of the Life of Lorenzo had given him celebrity, that he began to study Greek. In a copy of Homer in possession of his family, we find the following note:—"Finished the Odyssey the day I came to Allerton, 18th March, 1799—W. R."

From his fifteenth to his twentieth year, he appears, from some memoranda which he has left, to have studied very assiduously during his leisure hours; and he luckily found some associates, with congenial tastes and habits, of whose friendship he always spoke, to his latest hour, with affectionate regard. Among those the most conspicuous were Mr. Edward Rogers, Mr. William Clarke, Mr. Richard Lowndes, Mr. William Neilson and Mr. Francis Holden. To the latter, whose various acquirements and extraordinary talents were in after life the frequent theme of Roscoe's enthusiastic encomiums, he was disposed to attribute his first inclination to the study of modern languages; and he had pleasure in acknowledging, that it was by the advice and encouragement of this young friend, that he devoted himself assiduously to the study of Italian. In his acquisition of the elements of French and Italian, he does not seem to have had any other assistance than the advice and encouragement of young Holden, who, seeing the aptitude and industry of his friend, strenuously urged him to pursue the path which his own genius had opened to his aspirations after literary distinction.

In fact, Roscoe owed very little of his acquirements to any instructor. What he drew from the conversation of his early associates there is every reason to believe he amply repaid in kind; and, with the single

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exception of Burns, I do not know any of our distinguished writers who is less indebted to others for assistance in the road to literary eminence than WILLIAM ROSCOE—certainly few of them could with more truth exclaim, in the language of *Phemius*, when a suppliant to Ulysses,—

Αὐτοδίδακτος δ' εἰμι.

During the time of his apprenticeship Mr. Roscoe formed an agreement with his friends Clarke, Lowndes and Holden, to meet early in the morning, before the hours of business, for the purpose of reading together some Latin author, and discoursing on what they read. The example of these youthful students cannot be too earnestly inculcated on the rising generation of this place, while the success of one at least of them in the fields of literature is a striking proof of what may be obtained by such appropriation of hours too often lost to mental improvement. While classic authors thus engaged his morning leisure, Roscoe continued earnestly to cultivate Italian literature. It would seem that, before his twentieth year, he had read, in the original, several of the Italian historians, and, at that time even, had set his mind on becoming the biographer of Lorenzo de' Medici, the great patron of the early restorers of ancient learning.

He had, from an early period of his life, felt the force of poetic inspiration, and had undoubtedly cultivated the Muses with high promise of brilliant success, ere he had attained his twentieth summer. A considerable number of his early verses remain, which breathe an ardent spirit of poetry. Some of these are addressed to a young lady of the same age, whose

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poetical genius had excited his warmest admiration, and who appears to have no less admired the talents of Roscoe. One of her MS. poems, written about 1772, contains the following lines, which at once prove the poetic powers of the author (destined afterwards to become the mother of an eminent poet), and shew her discernment in detecting, in the unknown attorney's clerk, the germ of future eminence :—

"But cease, my Muse, unequal to the task,
Forbear the effort! and to nobler hands
Resign the lyre! Thee Roscoe! every Muse
Uncalled attends, and uninvoked inspires;
In blooming shades and amaranthine bowers
They weave the future garland for thy brow,
And wait to crown thee with immortal fame;—
Thee Wisdom leads in all her lovely walks,
Thee Genius fires, and moral beauty charms;
Be it thy task to touch the feeling heart,
Correct its passions, and exalt its aims;
Teach pride to own, and owning to obey
Fair Virtue's dictates, and her sacred laws,
To brighter worlds shew thou the glorious road,
And be thy life as moral as thy song."

Congeniality of disposition and genius drew close the bands of friendship between this lady and Mr. Roscoe; and it is worthy of notice, that his first published production, the poem entitled *Mount Pleasant*, written at the age of nineteen, was originally inscribed to her, although, when printed, the address was omitted.

This poem, which exhibits, with considerable power of versification, a warm poetical feeling of the beauties of nature, is still more remarkable for the indignant apostrophe to Britons on the slave-trade; an expression of generous sympathy with the suffering sons of Africa, which it required no inconsiderable share of moral

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courage to promulgate at that period, and in the chief seat of the odious traffic.

> "Shame to mankind! But shame to Britons most,
> Who all the sweets of Liberty can boast;
> Yet, deaf to ev'ry human claim, deny
> That bliss to others which themselves enjoy:
> Life's bitter draught with harsher bitter fill,
> Blast ev'ry joy, and add to ev'ry ill;
> The trembling limbs with galling iron bind,
> Nor loose the heavier bondage of the mind."

These lines are here chiefly quoted to show how early Roscoe denounced the traffic in human flesh; and that the love of liberty which marked his whole life, was in him, not the creation of circumstances that brought him into public notice, but had grown up with his expanding faculties, and became confirmed by the reflections of his maturer years.

While Roscoe was thus improving his literary taste in the moments snatched from the fatigues of his profession, he devoted no inconsiderable portion of his attention to the study and promotion of the fine arts in his native town. He was the chief instigator, and most active member, of a small society formed here in 1772, "*for the encouragement of designing, drawing and painting;*" and he read before that association, at one of its first meetings, an ode, addressed to the institution, which was afterwards published with the poem of *Mount Pleasant*, in 1777.

Soon after the termination of his articles of clerkship, Mr. Roscoe entered into partnership, as an attorney, with Mr. Aspinall; and in this profession he continued, first with that gentleman, and afterwards with Mr. Joshua Lace, until the year 1796. It is proper to remark, that Mr. Roscoe, though eminent as

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a practitioner, never relished his profession, and had always expressed his determination to retire from practice as an attorney, whenever the possession of a moderate competence should enable him to devote his attention to literary pursuits. He continued, however, for several years to attend sedulously to his business; but it was not until the year 1781 that the profits of his exertions enabled him to marry, when he was united to Jane, the second daughter of Mr. William Griffies, a respectable tradesman of Liverpool.

This union was productive of the utmost domestic happiness to the subject of this memoir, and made him the happy father of seven sons and three daughters; all of whom, except a son and a daughter, survive him.

For several years after his marriage, at intervals of leisure, he contrived to increase those rich treasures of literary information, and to cultivate that taste for the fine arts which gave a peculiar charm to his conversation, and paved the way to his future celebrity.

In the year 1787, the agitation of the abolition of the slave-trade drew Mr. Roscoe into the field of political controversy; and he became the author of two anonymous pamphlets on that great question. The first was entitled "*Original View of the African Slave Trade, demonstrating its injustice and impolicy; with hints toward a Bill for its abolition.*" The second was called forth by the publication of the Rev. Raymond Harris, entitled "*Scriptural Researches on the Licetness of the Slave Trade.*" That author had shewn much dexterity as a controversialist. The general scope of his argument is based on the practice of possessing *bond-servants* being mentioned in the Old Testament,

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without any condemnatory comment'; and from the noted injunction of St. Paul to the Δουλοι of the New Testament, "*Be obedient to them that are your masters, according to the flesh, with fear and trembling,*" it is inferred, that Christianity gives a warrant for holding our fellow men in slavery. The first proposition was supported by the fact, that Abraham and other very exemplary patriarchs purchased slaves or bond-servants without any stigma being cast on their humanity or rectitude; and the second was defended by the repeated injunctions of the apostles to their converts to fear those in authority; a mode of reasoning which has been lately borrowed by two Presbyterian divines from this reverend Jesuit; whose work, it is said, was considered, by the Common Council of Liverpool of that day, as worthy of a donation of £200 to the author.

Harris's pamphlet caused a considerable sensation; but was soon attacked by the Rev. Mr. Dannet, minister of St. John's, in Liverpool, who was evidently inferior as a controversialist to his Catholic opponent; but the doctrines of the latter were ably and warmly attacked in Mr. Roscoe's second essay, which bore the title of "*Scriptural Refutation of a Pamphlet lately published by the Rev. Raymond Harris, &c.*" on the Christian principles that "all men are equal in the sight of God," and the benevolent injunction of the great Founder of our religion, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

The question of the slave trade, at that period, so engrossed the mind of Roscoe, that, in the same year he published his well known poetic effusion, "The

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Wrongs of Africa," in two parts; the profits from the sale of which he placed at the disposal of the committee then formed for promoting the abolition of the slave trade.

The Society for the encouragement of the Arts of Design had soon melted away, but Mr. Roscoe, about the time now alluded to, succeeded in forming a new association for a similar purpose; and to their exertions Liverpool is indebted for its first exhibitions of works of art, which were continued for several years with great success. To this Society, which bore the name of "Liverpool Academy for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts," Mr. Roscoe delivered a series of lectures on the Progress and Vicissitudes of Taste, which remain in manuscript, and which he appears to have, at one time, contemplated to publish, as I find among them a title page, thus—"*An Historical Inquiry into the Rise, Progress and Vicissitudes of Taste, as exemplified in Works of Literature and of Art. In two volumes. Vol. I.*" The manuscript, however, does not seem to have received his last corrections, though many of the observations are original and interesting.

He had also, for some years, a correspondence with Mr. Strutt, the engraver and antiquary, and author of the valuable *Dictionary of Engravers.* The letters of Strutt acknowledge the receipt of various important disquisitions on the history of engraving from Mr. Roscoe, of which, if I mistake not, Mr. Strutt availed himself, and incorporated them in the preliminary essays to his Dictionary.

About the same period Mr. Roscoe commenced his

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fine collection of prints, which was particularly rich in painters' etchings and engravings of the old masters. This collection was chiefly formed between the years 1780 and 1790, but continued for many years to receive valuable additions, by every journey to London, which his professional business often rendered necessary.

At a later period he began to collect drawings by great masters, and of these his collection was remarkably choice, his taste and judgment in that department being excellent.

From the time when his professional exertions put it in his power to indulge his elegant propensities, the formation of a library became a prominent article in his expenditure. Simple and refined in his habits, these were his chief expenses. He was not, however, a mere collector. His books, his prints, and other works of art, were diligently employed to store his mind, or to improve his taste, with the wisdom and art of former ages.

In the year 1789, after much previous study of Italian literature, he began to devote himself to the object of his early ambition, the *Life of Lorenzo the Magnificent*. In the course of that year he communicated his intention to his valued friend William Clarke (who, on account of his health, in the autumn of 1789, had fixed his residence at Fiesole, near Florence), and requested his assistance in collecting manuscript documents relating to the subject. The fruits of the friendly exertions of that amiable man are best given in Roscoe's own words.

—"An intimate friend, with whom I had been many years united in studies and affection, had paid a visit

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to Italy, and had fixed his winter residence at Florence. I well knew that I had only to request his assistance, in order to obtain whatever information he had an opportunity of procuring, from the very spot which was to be the scene of my intended history. My inquiries were particularly directed to the Laurentian and Ricardi Libraries, which I was convinced would afford much original and interesting information. It would be unjust merely to say that my friend afforded me the assistance I required; he went far beyond even the hopes I had formed,—and his return to his native country was, if possible, rendered still more grateful to me, by the materials which he had collected for my use.*"

Of these documents several are published entire in the appendix to Roscoe's work, especially the poems of Lorenzo; the existence of which had escaped the knowledge of the former biographers of the *Princely Merchant.*

From a very early period, Mr. Roscoe had taken a deep interest in political matters. In the year 1788, he took an active part at the meeting which, in Liverpool, as well as in other parts of England, assembled to commemorate the centenary of the Revolution that expelled the family of Stuart from the throne of these kingdoms; and he composed an ode, which was recited on that occasion.

In the following year the French Revolution broke out; and, in common with many warm and generous spirits, he hailed its fair and auspicious dawn with all the devotion of a friend to the human race, the ardour

* Preface to Lorenzo.

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of a patriot, and the enthusiasm of a poet. To those who recollect the flattering commencement of that extraordinary movement, it is unnecessary to observe that it was viewed with unmixed satisfaction by a great majority of the people of this country, as affording the prospect of vast improvements in the social institutions of the European commonwealth. In various places meetings of the friends of liberty were held, similar to those of the preceding year, to celebrate another triumph of a great people over an unjust and tyrannical government; and at one of those assemblies Roscoe produced his two admirable lyrics—

"O'er the vine-cover'd hills and gay valleys of France,"

and,

"Unfold, Father Time, thy long records unfold."

These brilliant and exulting strains were poured forth in the year 1789, while "the Genius of French freedom," in the nervous language of Currie, "appeared on our southern horizon with the countenance of an angel,"—and ere she had yet "assumed the features of a demon, and vanished in a shower of blood."

Mr. Roscoe had, on several occasions, made himself conspicuous by his attachment to the cause of civil and religious liberty, in such a degree as to attract the notice of several eminent statesmen, and particularly of the late Marquis of Lansdowne, with whom he maintained a close correspondence until the death of that nobleman. Literature, and especially politics, were the subjects of their correspondence; and the letters show how considerable were the parliamentary reforms advocated by the Whig statesmen of that period.

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The violence of the second French National Assembly, in the two succeeding years, alienated a great many of their admirers in this country; but many good men still hoped that the ferment would subside into rational liberty, and deprecated the evident hostility which our government began, in 1792, to exhibit. Among the latter was Mr. Roscoe. On the appearance of Mr. Pitt's famous proclamation against sedition, the minds of men were much agitated, and greatly divided. The friends of the minister in Liverpool convened a meeting to thank his Majesty for the proclamation. Mr. Roscoe, seconded by the late William Rathbone, succeeded in carrying a counter-address; but, on the following day, a mob rose and destroyed the counter-address where it lay for signature. Party spirit, on that occasion, rose so high in Liverpool, that a small private literary society, of which Mr. Roscoe, Mr. Rathbone and Dr. Currie were members*, thought it expedient to discontinue their meetings, lest their objects should, by party malice, be represented as seditious or revolutionary.

On the breaking out of the war with France, Roscoe again appears as a political writer. He inveighed against the unjust and impolitic interference of this Government with France; and, in a pamphlet entitled "*Thoughts on the late Failures,*" published in 1793, he attributes the mercantile distress of that period to the consequences of our meddling policy, a subject which he resumed in 1796, in "*An Exposure of the*

* Besides these gentlemen, it consisted of the Rev. Joseph Smith, the Rev. John Yates, Mr. Ralph Eddows, Mr. Tattersall, the Rev. William Shepherd and Dr. Rutter.

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Fallacies of Mr. Burke's" celebrated invectives against the French Revolution.

We come now to the principal event in the history of our author, the publication of "*The Life of Lorenzo de' Medici,*" which appeared in the winter of 1795, in two volumes quarto. The work was printed by John M'Creery, in Liverpool, and is a fine specimen of provincial typography, both for accuracy and elegance of execution.

The sensation produced by this work was immense; the first edition was rapidly exhausted, and a second was demanded by the public within a few months. Letters of the most gratifying kind were showered on the author from high literary authorities in all quarters. Among others, the late Earl of Bristol, Bishop of Derry, then resident at Rome, hailed with the highest encomiums the appearance of an English work, which was the surprise and envy of the Italians themselves; and he immediately wrote to the publisher to know "what present of Italian books would be most acceptable to the accomplished author." Its success on the continent was no less gratifying. Besides a reprint of the original, the work was speedily translated into the Italian, French and German languages; and it procured for Roscoe the esteem and correspondence of some of the most eminent literary men of Europe.

A work which has received such marked public approbation, which has gone through so many large editions in Britain, which has been translated into the most polished tongues of the continent, it is not my intention now to criticise. I shall content myself with remarking, that the author's intimate acquaintance

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with the literature of Italy has excited the surprise even of Italians; and I well recollect the incredulous stare with which an Italian nobleman, of great literary taste and information, received my assertion that Mr. Roscoe had never been out of England.

The success of the Life of Lorenzo appears to have confirmed the author's intention of relinquishing his practice as an attorney; and, some time after that event, he entered his name as a member of Grey's Inn, with a view of being called to the bar. This determination, however, he also relinquished, upon keeping a few terms.

In the year 1797, while his name remained on the books of Grey's Inn, he paid a visit of some length to London. In consequence of his literary reputation, and his intimacy with Lord Lansdowne, he was introduced into the first literary and various political circles: in particular, he used to state, that he then had the pleasure of becoming personally acquainted with Mr. Fox, and Mr. now Lord Grey; and he formed besides many valued private friendships, which were dissolved only by death. Among those who then more particularly gained his esteem he often mentioned Dr. Moore, author of *Zeluco*, of the spirited "*View of Manners in Italy*," and of a "*Journal of a Residence in France*,"—the father of the gallant and unfortunate Sir John Moore.

Mr. Roscoe's retirement from professional labours enabled him to devote himself with increased assiduity to Italian literature. To relieve his mind from the fatigue of more intense researches, he this year translated into English verse the *Balia* of Tansillo, in

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which the long neglected beauties of the Italian poet are brought home to British ears and British feelings with admirable tact and spirit. His more arduous occupations were the vast stores of Italian history about the period of the restoration of Letters, with a view to the Life of Leo X.; a subject which had been recommended to him by Horace Walpole (Lord Orford), and some other literary friends, after his successful publication of the Life of *Lorenzo the Magnificent*.

In the year 1798, the want of a public reading-room on a better footing than Liverpool then could boast, caused the foundation of our Athenæum. The plan suggested by Dr. Rutter was warmly supported by Mr. Roscoe, Dr. Currie, Mr. George Case and some other gentlemen, who, exerting their influence among their friends, obtained so general a subscription in Liverpool, that the foundations of our magnificent Consultation Library and News-Room were speedily laid, and a considerable collection of books soon formed. In this Institution, as creditable to his native town, Mr. Roscoe always took much delight.

The numerous strangers who were now attracted to Liverpool, chiefly by the reputation of our distinguished fellow-citizen, caused such encroachments on his time, notwithstanding his retirement from business, that he resolved to retreat into the country; and with this view he purchased half of the estate of Allerton from the representatives of Mrs. Hardman, and removed to that beautiful spot in 1799. In a playful letter to Fuseli the painter, Mr. Roscoe mentions his removal, and his intention of not again embarking in any kind of business, but of dedicating himself wholly

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to agricultural and literary pursuits. His tastes were simple, his views moderate, and his means fully competent to realize his plans; from which it is greatly to be lamented that any circumstances should ever have induced him to deviate. While employed as a professional man to arrange the involved concerns of the bank of Messrs. J. and W. Clarke, he was thus brought into contact with Sir Benjamin Hammet, a London banker, who held acceptances of the Liverpool Bank to an immense amount (I am informed for £200,000.) Hammet was so struck with Roscoe's ability in arranging the affairs of his friends, that he wished him to become a partner in the concern. This he repeatedly refused; but Hammet threatening, in case of his refusal to join the concern, to make it bankrupt, Roscoe, satisfied that the assets were, in ordinary times, more than sufficient to cover the demands against the bank, finally consented, and for twenty years the principal part of his time was occupied in the management of that important establishment.

While thus employed, the hours which he was now enabled to devote to the history of Leo were abstracted from the period usually dedicated to repose or recreation. Yet, with all these demands on his application, the interest he always felt on great political questions did not suffer him to view in silence the crisis of 1802, but called forth his pamphlet entitled "*Observations on the relative situation of Great Britain and France;*" a tract in which he has recorded his detestation of war, and his anxiety to see the two foremost nations of Europe engaged in the less guilty rivalry for pre-eminence in the arts of peace.

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In 1802 the Botanic Garden of Liverpool was established, chiefly through the influence of Mr. Roscoe, and, at its opening, he delivered an address to the proprietors, which was printed. In this establishment he always took the interest of a parent in a favourite child. Under his auspices, and the consummate skill of Mr. John Shepherd, the Curator of the garden, it speedily became conspicuous among botanical establishments, and it still ranks among the first in Europe.

In 1805 he completed his history of "*the Life and Pontificate of Leo, X.*" which appeared that year in four volumes 4to.

This elaborate work had been the fruit of much research, of intense previous study, and was always regarded by its author as superior to his Life of Lorenzo: yet it was not so favourably received by the British public; a circumstance with some truth attributed to the violent attacks on it in several of our periodical works.

The hostility of some of the reviews was evidently produced by political rancour toward Roscoe as an opponent of the ministerial measures of that eventful period; in others it sprung from anger at the manner in which he had treated the character of Luther as the founder of a new church.

It appears to me that Roscoe had sufficiently lauded the boldness and constancy of the man to whom we owe the assertion of private judgment in religious and civil matters; that he had given the history of Luther with the impartiality of a searcher after truth, admitting his failings and his errors, while he applauded his courage and undoubted talents; that the early patrons of litera-

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ture and the fine arts demanded our warm approbation and our gratitude, and that the historian of the Revival of Letters had wisely dwelt more on the unquestionable merits of Leo and his family, in promoting that great object, than in raking up, from the gross scurrility of a profligate age, imputed crimes or vices, which, after all, rest only on the doubtful authority of acrimonious and vindictive *controversialists*.

The merits of the Life of Leo were, however, differently estimated on the Continent. It was speedily translated into French, German and Italian; and the extensive sale of several editions of it in Italy, where, it may be fairly presumed, the best judgment of its wants or its defects could be formed, sufficiently attests the character which foreign critics entertain of this great work of our author.

On the appearance of the British criticisms, Mr. Roscoe prepared a full answer to the objections of the reviewers, but this reply he never published; contenting himself with inserting a short abstract of it in the preface to the second edition, which appeared in 1806, within a year from the publication of the first. The chief objections, in addition to the criticisms above stated, were, that he was fond of paradoxical opinions,—as instanced in the chivalrous defence of the character of Lucretia Borgia,—and in his doubting whether Pope Alexander VI. was stained with every crime laid to his charge by his numerous enemies,—that he was too fond of quotations from the poets,—and that by retaining Italian orthography of proper names, he had made needless innovations on our language. These charges are not very important defects in such an elaborate

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work, even if we admit their justice. In my opinion, they are sufficiently answered by his few remarks; and the Life and Pontificate of Leo X. already ranks, by the beauty of its style, and the value of research, among our standard historical works.

While engaged in these occupations, on the dissolution of Parliament in October, 1806, Mr. Roscoe was to himself most unexpectedly called on to become a candidate for the representation of his native town. The requisition was signed only a few days previous to the election:—and, after a keen contest for eight days, during which there was a coalition against him, between the friends of the rival candidates Generals Tarleton and Gascoyne, he was placed at the head of the poll by a large majority.

His parliamentary career was of short duration, but he had the satisfaction, in that short period, of declaring his sentiments on several subjects in which he felt a deep interest. He spoke and voted for Sir Samuel Romilly's bill *for rendering real estates subject to simple contract debts;* he had the happiness to lift his voice in Parliament for the abolition of the slave-trade, and to see that great act of national justice triumphantly carried; he had an opportunity of advocating the claims of our Roman Catholic brethren to an equality of political rights; and he delivered his sentiments with indignant energy on the dismissal of the Whig administration in 1807, on their attempt to redeem the pledge given by Pitt at the period of the Irish Union; a pledge by themselves always considered as just and expedient.

Mr. Roscoe's chief parliamentary friends at that time

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were Mr. Whitbread, Sir Samuel Romilly, and Mr. William Smith; but he never permanently attached himself to the ministry: and was by them regarded as a person who would rather act on his own views of what was right, than enter into the trammels of party.

On the dissolution of Parliament, he received another requisition to offer himself for Liverpool, and was escorted into town by a very numerous and respectable *cortege*. His opponents, however, had succeeded in prejudicing many of the populace against him, especially on the ground of his vote for the abolition of the Slave-Trade—a traffic which they had been taught to consider as essential to the commercial greatness of the port; and the rage of zealots was kindled against him for his speech on the Catholic Question. The consequence was, that, on the arrival of the *cortege* in Castle-street, a serious riot took place, and Mr. Roscoe was induced, from the fear of hazarding the peace of the town, to decline allowing himself to be again put in nomination. I have reason to believe that this determination did not cause him much regret; a distaste for parliamentary duties was not unnatural to a man of his previous habits, entering on a new career at a rather advanced period of life. These considerations determined him to withdraw from the contest; but he was, without his concurrence, or that of his most intimate friends, proposed as a candidate on that occasion, as well as in 1812, when he was put in nomination in a similar manner at Leicester without his consent, and polled a very considerable number of votes.

We have already noticed Mr. Roscoe as the earnest advocate of peace. In 1808 he published "*Considera-*

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tions on the Causes and Consequences of the War with France,"—a pamphlet which excited much attention, and speedily went through eight editions. It was followed in the same year by another pamphlet, entitled "*Remarks on the Proposals made to Great Britain for opening Negociations for Peace with France,*" in which he endeavoured to shew that the advances of France had not been met with a sincere desire on the part of our Government to put an end to the miseries of a ruinous and bloody contest.

In 1810 Mr. Roscoe published a Letter to the present Lord Chancellor, then Mr. Brougham, on the question of *Parliamentary Reform.* In that tract he advocates a more extensive Reform than the partial measures then in contemplation by the Opposition; and the coincidence, in many respects, between his suggestions and a late measure, has, within the last few months, caused a republication of Mr. Roscoe's pamphlet.

This letter brought him into more immediate correspondence with Mr. Brougham; and when that gentleman was invited to become a candidate for the representation of Liverpool in 1812, Mr. Roscoe not only entered warmly into the contest to support Mr. Brougham, but, on the return of Mr. Canning, the rival candidate, wrote a caustic review of the electioneering speeches of that statesman, which the enthusiasm of his admirers had collected into a bulky pamphlet. Such ephemeral specimens of oratory should, on all sides, be permitted to remain in the less ambitious pages of provincial newspapers.

At every period of his life Mr. Roscoe was much

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attached to the study of Botany. As we have stated, the establishment of our Botanic Garden was principally due to his suggestions. In 1809, he presented to the Linnean Society his valuable paper "*On a new arrangement of the Scitaminean order of plants*," which appeared in their Transactions, and established his claim to the character of an original thinker in this elegant department of natural history. His reputation, still more than the claims of private friendship, led Sir James Edward Smith to institute the genus *Roscoea*, which now contains many species of that beautiful order.

A similarity of political principles, and congeniality of taste for agricultural improvements, had for some time made Roscoe acquainted with Mr. Coke, of Norfolk. In 1814, he was invited to visit Holkham, the splendid seat of that eminent agriculturist. There he found ample employment in the magnificent library, collected by the late Lord Leicester, uncle to the present possessor, a nobleman who, with vast wealth, possessed a highly cultivated mind, and a passion for collecting books and manuscripts. It was well known that the collection was immensely rich in classical manuscripts and unpublished works on Italian history. Mr. Roscoe readily undertook the examination of this superb collection, which had afforded to Drakenborck the manuscript copies of Livy employed in his valuable edition of the Roman Historian, and which, among 600 manuscript volumes of ecclesiastical annals and Italian civil history, was discovered by Mr. Roscoe to contain one of the lost volumes of Leonardo da Vinci's *Treatises on Mechanics*, and the long deplored and precious

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volume in which Rafaello, at the desire of the Pontiff, had made *pen drawings* of the remains of ancient Roman magnificence, illustrated by short descriptions in his own handwriting. Mr. Roscoe undertook to make a *catalogue raisonnée* of the manuscripts of the collection—a task which he some years afterwards, with the assistance of Mr. Madden, now one of the librarians of the British Museum, fully accomplished. This catalogue (of which a short account was given to this society a few years ago) extends to four or five thick folio volumes, and is enriched with engraved *fac similes* and illuminated ornaments.

The manuscripts had been little attended to for many years. Most of them were in the original coarse paper covers, and some were injured by damp and time. The whole were some time afterwards consigned to Mr. Roscoe's care, who put them into the hands of our eminent binder, the late Mr. John Jones, who, by great industry and skill, succeeded in restoring crumpled vellum to its original smoothness, in pasting torn leaves with wonderful neatness, and who bound the whole collection in a durable and elegant manner. An ancient and admirable Hebrew manuscript of the Pentateuch*, written in a beautiful hand, on deer-skins, forming a roll thirty-eight feet in length, was mounted, by the same ingenious artist, on rollers ornamented with silver bells, under the direction of a learned Rabbi, who believed the manuscript to be an eastern transcript of great antiquity.

Toward the close of 1815, by one of our too frequent commercial convulsions, and by the extent of their

* Believed to be more than 1000 years old.

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accommodations to persons engaged in business, the affairs of the bank in which Mr. Roscoe was a partner became involved, and the house found it necessary to suspend payments. For four years Mr. Roscoe devoted himself to the arrangement of their affairs; entertaining throughout the most sanguine hopes of being able finally to discharge all their engagements, as the joint property of the partners was valued, at the time of the suspension of payments, at considerably more than the amount of their debts. The depreciation, however, of that property, combined with other circumstances over which Mr. Roscoe had no control, prevented the accomplishment of his most earnest wishes, and in 1820 he became a bankrupt. Previous to this (in the year 1816), his noble library, his fine collection of prints and drawings, and his curious collection of paintings were dispersed, and the proceeds of the sale were applied to the payment of the debts of the house. It will convey some idea of the collection to state that the books, consisting of about 2000 works, sold for no less a sum than £5150; the prints for £1886; the drawings for £750; and the pictures for £3239; making a total of £11,025.

The beautiful sonnet written by Mr. Roscoe on parting with his library was given to a friend, and handed about in manuscript; but the Reverend William Beloe has since inserted it, without any acknowledgment, in his autobiography, as the motto to one of the chapters of that conceited work.*

* SONNET.—

"As one who destined from his friends to part,
Regrets their loss, yet hopes again erewhile
To share their converse, and enjoy their smile,
And tempers as he may Affliction's dart,—

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Several of Mr. Roscoe's friends, anxious to preserve to him various works, which they knew he highly prized, either for their intrinsic worth, or as the gift of esteemed friends, bought them up at the sale of his library, to the amount of £600, and presented them to Mr. Roscoe. The gift, however, was firmly but gratefully declined; and the subscribers resolved to present the collection to the Athenæum Library, to be kept together as a testimony of their esteem for their respected friend; and of that library the collection now forms a distinct part.

A selection from his pictures, comprising specimens of art highly illustrative of the progress of painting, was purchased by several of the same gentlemen, at a liberal price, fixed by Mr. Winstanley and myself, and presented to the Royal Institution by those admirers of Roscoe. This collection cost £50, and forms an interesting part of the objects which attract strangers to our Institution.

I may here remark, that the original plan of the Liverpool Royal Institution originated, and was drawn up by me in 1813; although it was carried into effect during my absence on the Continent in 1814. Mr. Roscoe took an active part in this measure, was long

Thus, lov'd associates! chiefs of elder art!
Teachers of wisdom, who could once beguile
My tedious hours, and brighten ev'ry toil,
I now resign you—nor with fainting heart;
For, pass a few short years, or days, or hours,
And happier seasons may their dawn unfold,
And all your sacred fellowships restore;
When, freed from earth, unlimited its powers,
Mind shall with mind direct communion hold,
And kindred spirits meet to part no more."

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the Chairman of the Committees while it was struggling into existence; and, as its first President, read an eloquent address on the opening of the Institution, in the year 1817.

From an early period, Mr. Roscoe had been a warm advocate for a reformation of the sanguinary penal code of this country. His humanity and amiable mind revolted from the frequency of executions; and he eagerly desired to see those statutes which awarded death for trifling offences, and are too barbarous to be enforced in the present day, expunged from the code of British jurisprudence. Shortly before the period of his misfortunes, his attention had been turned to the subject of penal law and prison discipline. In 1819 he published his tract, entitled "*Observations on Penal Jurisprudence, and the Reformation of Criminals;*" which was followed, between that period and 1825, by two other dissertations on the same subject.

The principle of the system which he advocates is, that the only legitimate object of punishment is the prevention of a repetition of the crime, by a reformation of the offenders; which effect he proposed to accomplish by hard labour in penitentiaries, and by moral instruction. He denies that we have any right to punish for the mere benefit to society of the example. He inveighs against the barbarous maxim that revenge or expiation for the injury committed ought ever to be the principle of penal legislation; and cannot admit that retribution to the injured party can be the proposed end of punishment. In the third part of his essay he seems to doubt the propriety of the punishment of death in any case—Part iii. p. 106—but, at all events, he considers that it

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should be reserved for four or five crimes of the blackest dye. These essays contain the outline of some principles which are now generally acknowledged; and if the humanity and generous spirit of the author have led him to form a too favourable estimate of human nature, and to overlook some difficulties in the practical application of his principles of legislation, we cannot but admire the benevolent enthusiasm and earnest appeal to the best feelings of our nature which are stampt on every page of his treatise.

In his second tract he had pointed out the evil consequences likely to result from too great severity in prison discipline, and had entered a warm protest against the horrid punishment of long continued solitary confinement, as a general measure for effecting this reformation of offenders. He severely commented, in the third part, on the atrocities which appeared to have been perpetrated in the Auburn Penitentiary, in the State of New York. This drew him into a long controversy with several American writers in the latter years of his life; and to the zeal with which he devoted himself to plead the cause of the outcasts of society, we have to ascribe the first serious shock to his general health, as I shall by and by have occasion to notice; but he had the happiness to find, after much angry discussion in the newspapers of the western world, that his arguments against solitary confinement, which he stigmatized as the utmost refinement of cruelty, and utterly ineffectual as a punishment, were not lost on the Americans. The infirm state of Mr. Roscoe's health at that time brought me much into contact with my venerable friend; and when he learnt,

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from various quarters, that the change which was taking place in the prison discipline of America was in no small degree attributed to his expostulations, I heard him repeatedly declare, "that no literary distinction had ever afforded him half the gratification he received from the reflection on the part he had taken on this great question; and he expressed his satisfaction that he now might be permitted to think that he had not lived altogether in vain."

I have, in noticing the conclusion of this controversy, anticipated some events of his life to which we must now return.

When released from the harassing cares of business, the mind of Mr. Roscoe, with the elasticity and application of youth, diligently entered on various literary projects. Since the first appearance of the Life of Lorenzo, he had obtained from Italy, and elsewhere, various documents illustrative of that work. These he prepared for publication, together with some strictures on the manner in which the character and biography of Lorenzo had been treated by Sismondi and some other writers. This work appeared in an 8vo volume, in 1822, under the title of "*Illustrations of the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici.*" The strong terms in which Sismondi accused Mr. Roscoe of partiality to the Medici Family, and of palliating their crimes, drew forth an able and indignant answer; yet, it is pleasing to reflect, that when Sismondi, a few years afterwards, visited England, Mr. Roscoe formed with him a personal acquaintance in no way affected by their literary controversy.

About the same period, Mr. Roscoe published an

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amusing "*Memoir of Richard Roberts,*" a self-taught linguist, well known in Liverpool by the extraordinary number of languages which he can read, no less than by the filth of his person. The profits of this publication Mr. Roscoe humanely dedicated to the use of this singular person; whose intellect, defective in every thing but language, renders him as helpless as a child; and Roberts may now be seen in whole clothes, with his portable library stuffed, as in former times, between his shirt and his skin; for he disdains a fixed abode.

An application having been made to Mr. Roscoe to become the editor of a new edition of Pope's works, and to furnish a fresh life of the author, Mr. Roscoe engaged in it with all the ardour of a poet, having ever been a warm admirer of Pope's genius. This was no trifling task—for he added notes on the poems with much care; and in the life, which forms the first volume of that edition, defended the talents and character of Pope from sundry imputations cast on him by Mr. Bowles and others. The date of publication was 1824.

About the same time, he superintended a new edition of the *Lives of Lorenzo and Leo,* to the latter of which he added many new notes.

In 1824, Mr. Roscoe was elected a "Royal Associate" of the Royal Society of Literature, founded by his late Majesty George IV. A pension of £100 a year was awarded to each of ten associates, which Mr. Roscoe enjoyed for three or four years; but which, from the neglect of providing a permanent fund for the purpose, would have ceased about the time of his decease.

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The great gold medal of the Society, value fifty guineas, was also awarded to him as an historian, two years before he died; and it remains with his family.

It would be unjust to omit, that the misfortunes of our distinguished fellow citizen, called forth the warm sympathy of his numerous friends, and prompted them to take steps for securing him against their immediate consequences. It is more necessary to state this, because many unjust imputations have been vented against the inhabitants of Liverpool, on account of their supposed neglect of Mr. Roscoe in his adversity. There was considerable delicacy necessary in the steps which were taken to testify their esteem and attachment. Mr. Roscoe had a noble and independent mind. He had steadily refused the proffered gift of a valuable selection from his library, even after it had been for that purpose bought by his friends at the sale; and those who had the pleasure of being intimate with him, well knew how necessary it would be to keep him in ignorance of what was intended, until it was accomplished. During a second visit which he made to Holkham, a private fund was quickly subscribed among his friends, for the purchase of an annuity on the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Roscoe. The delicate task of communicating what was done devolved on me; and in the correspondence which ensued between us, though his pride of independence was at first alarmed, the example of his friend Charles James Fox, under similar circumstances, was successfully urged, to reconcile his mind to receive this spontaneous homage to his talents and his worth, from sincerely attached friends.

We have already noticed Mr. Roscoe's early attach-

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ment to botany, and his critical labours on the order *Scitamineæ*, to which he had long paid much attention, stimulated by the continual additions this order was receiving from the East and West Indies. The number of new species which the judicious care of Mr. Shepherd, the skilful curator of our Botanic Garden, had successfully cultivated, together with the dried specimens which Mr. Roscoe received from various quarters, determined him to publish a work containing coloured figures of new or interesting species, with botanical descriptions. This gave rise to the most splendid botanical work* that ever issued from the provincial press of any country; which occupied much of his time during the latter years of his life, and was only completed shortly before his death. Of this superb work he printed too few copies; and before the second number came out, there was a necessity of reprinting additional copies of the first. The work is highly prized by botanists; and is particularly valued on the Continent, where, from the small number of impressions which Mr. Roscoe could be induced to throw off, it is extremely scarce. Many of the beautiful figures in his work are from his own spirited sketches; but the majority of them are the productions of the pencil of his daughter-in-law Mrs. Edward Roscoe, or of Miss R. Miller, of this place.

My acquaintance with Mr. Roscoe commenced in 1806, and I soon had the felicity of being received as an intimate friend. From 1810 I was further honoured by being consulted as his physician, in which capacity I watched with much anxiety over his declining health.

* George Smith, Liverpool.

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From the time of the first derangement of the affairs of the bank, the immense mental and bodily exertions which he made produced great inroads on a constitution naturally good. He then began, on much application to any subject, to be seized with occasional faintness; and once, in 1816, he was attacked at the bank with a slight loss of memory, which speedily wore off. His habits of intense study, after this period, produced similar effects; and while engaged in the controversy on prison discipline, after writing for the greatest part of a night, to overtake a ship about to sail for America, he was affected in the winter of 1827 with partial paralysis of the muscles of the mouth and tongue. I was immediately called; the patient was freely bled, on which he recovered his speech: and the introduction of a seton in his neck removed the paralytic affection of the mouth. Intense study was forbidden: and after a period of perfect relaxation from his literary occupations, he recovered sufficiently to be able to complete his botanical work, the catalogue of Mr. Coke's library, and to correct for the press his latest tracts on prison discipline. It was a great satisfaction to find his intellect quite entire, and it remained so until within an hour or two of his death. His bodily feebleness, however, gradually increased; yet, by the affectionate care of his family, his infirmities were little felt. His amusements were, various reading, the illustration of his son's translation of Lanzi's History of Italian Painting, by a small collection of engravings, together with putting the last hand to his botanical work. He was unable for the fatigue of receiving much company, or of seeing strangers, for some time before his death;

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yet he loved to converse with a few friends, and took a lively interest in the political events with which the last year (1830) was pregnant. On the French revolution of July, he wrote a long and earnest letter to M. La Fayette (with whom he had before occasionally corresponded), urging him to use the influence of his name and popularity, to induce the French nation to spare the lives of the ministers then under arrest; pointing out how a sanguinary punishment would detract from the glory of the revolution, and what a noble opportunity the French people now had of setting an example of mitigation of the criminal code to all the nations of Europe. This letter, and another of gratulation to the present Lord Chancellor, on his attaining that high office, were the last public acts of his indefatigable and useful life.*

In the month of June, 1831, he was attacked with influenza; and his exhausted frame being unable to struggle with the disease, effusion into the chest took place, and he expired on the 30th of that month, in the 78th year of his age.

Besides his published works, Mr. Roscoe has left behind him a large mass of papers, and an extensive and valuable correspondence.

Among the former are various dissertations on the fine arts, some of which appear in a finished state. In

* A short while before his death, in a conversation with the writer of this memoir, he spoke calmly of his increasing feebleness, and probable early dissolution. He "thanked the Almighty for having permitted him to pass a life of much happiness, which, though somewhat checkered by vicissitude, had been, on the whole, one of great enjoyment; and he trusted that he would be enabled cheerfully to resign it whenever it pleased God to call him."

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the year 1814 Mr. Roscoe had proposed to the writer of this memoir to undertake the translation of *Lanzi's Storia Pittorica della Italia*, and he engaged to furnish notes, and a preliminary dissertation. I had made considerable progress in the translation, when Mr. Roscoe's misfortunes, and my own professional avocations, interrupted the work; which has since been well executed by his son, Mr. Thomas Roscoe. Among the papers of my venerable friend, I find a very interesting introductory dissertation, intended for our joint work, tracing the history of the art of painting and sculpture to a much later period than their supposed extinction in the west, indeed almost to within 200 years of their supposed revival by the *Pisani and Cimabue*. This treatise is in such a state that it might be published, and it would form an excellent introduction to Lanzi's work. It is entitled, "*An Historical Sketch on the State of the Fine Arts during the Middle Ages.*"

I find, also, a curious dissertation on *Painters' Drawings;* another *on the Origin of Engraving on Wood and on Copper;* a third *on the Engravings of the Early German School.* There are large fragments also of a work *on the Etchings of the Italian Painters*, which contain much useful information; and a lecture "*on the Use of Prints*," another on the "*Practical Part of Painting*," and two "*on the Origin and Progress of Taste.*" There is also a poem on the origin of engraving, written in 1783, of which there are two copies in MS.

I have already mentioned, that the lectures on the Origin and Progress of Taste were extended into a treatise, which is not finished. This is also the case

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with some dissertations on the state of letters and the arts anterior to the Greeks, and their progress among that people. The whole seem to have been parts of a great work on the fine arts, which he left imperfect.

Among his papers are some MS. essays on moral and political subjects; and a considerable one "*On the principle of Vegetation and the Food of Plants.*"

His correspondence with various eminent characters is very extensive, and comprises a period of upwards of fifty years, during a succession of most interesting events. A selection of these letters will form an appendix to the Life of Mr. Roscoe, now in preparation.

The letters consist of,—

1. Correspondence on political subjects, with the Duke of Gloucester, the late and the present Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Whitbread, Sir Samuel Romilly, Mr. Creevy, Mr. Coke, Lord Holland, the present Lord Chancellor, and President Jefferson.

2. On penal jurisprudence and prison discipline, with Mr. Basil Montague, M. de La Fayette, M. Van Praet, Mr. Fowell Buxton; with Dr. Mease, Mr. Roberts Vaux, Mr. Stephen Allen, Mr. Bradford, and other American gentlemen.

3. On literary subjects, with Lord Carlisle, Lord Orford, Dr. Parr, Dr. Symmons. Dr. Aikin, Mr. Samuel Rogers, Mr Thomas Campbell, Mr. Montgomery, Miss Lucy Aiken, Mr. Dawson Turner, Mr. William Clarke, Professor William Smyth, Professor Wilson, Mr. Barnard Barton, Mr. Capel Lofft, Dr. Channing.

4. On matters relating to the fine arts, with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Fuseli, Mr. John Gibson, &c.

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5. On botany and agriculture, with Sir Joseph Banks, Sir John Sinclair, Sir James E. Smith, Dr. Wallich, Dr. Carey, Dr. Hooker.

6. On his history of the Medici Family, with Fabbroni, Moreni, Mecherini, Professor Sprengel, Count Bossi, and Mr. Henke.

In person, Mr. Roscoe was tall, and rather slender. In early life he possessed much bodily activity: his hair was light auburn, almost inclining to red; his full grey eye was clear and mild; his face expressive and cheerful. As he advanced in life, the benevolent expression of his countenance remained, but the vivacity of the features was tempered into a noble dignity, which it was impossible to see without respect and admiration; while the mouth bespoke taste and feeling, and the clustering hoary hair round his temples gave a venerable air to his manly features.

There are several representations of him; but none of them appear to me so finely to express the characteristic traits of his head as John Gibson's medallion. The portrait in the Institution, and Spence's busts, give us Mr. Roscoe in his decline with great fidelity. Gibson's marble bust is said to recall his youthful appearance; but the Terra Cotta medallion is Mr. Roscoe, as I should wish to remember him. I may add, that it has been exceedingly well copied in the fine medal, published by Mr. Clements, of this town, from a die by Clint.

Of Mr. Roscoe's genius and acquirements, his published works present a better memorial than any panegyric can confer; but I may be permitted to state my conviction, after having examined a great mass of

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his unfinished manuscript dissertations, that, had he been left to pursue his original plan of *literary retirement*, instead of again plunging into the cares and anxieties of *business*, he would have left behind a work on the History of the Fine Arts, far superior to any thing on that subject which British literature possesses.

In public life Mr. Roscoe was a consistent and fearless champion of civil and religious liberty; the uncompromising enemy of oppression, and the humane advocate of a mitigation of the severity of penal enactments.

Of the qualities of his heart, as a private individual, it is impossible to speak too highly. In the relations of husband, father, and friend, his conduct was most exemplary; and it would be difficult to point out a man who possessed the fascination of manner which attracts and rivets attachment, in a higher degree than William Roscoe.

He had deep and solemn feelings of devotion, which it was not his practice to obtrude on his acquaintances; but which he occasionally expressed to his intimate friends in the language of heartfelt piety. The beautiful invocation to the Deity, which he substituted for the intended dedication of his great botanical work, breathes the deep fervour of his adoration of the Supreme Creator; and is also remarkable as the actual suggestion of a poet's dream at the advanced age of seventy-six.

An innate love of sincerity and truth; simplicity, combined with a playful vivacity yet suavity of manners; a generous belief in the integrity of others, the consequence of his own rectitude of purpose; an

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anxiety to do justice to the merits of others; a liberal and judicious patronage of modest talent, struggling to escape from obscurity, joined to a natural cheerfulness of disposition; all united to convert into devoted and enthusiastic admirers, those who first sought his friendship from his literary reputation.

The fame of Roscoe belongs to his country:—the memory of his inestimable qualities remains to his friends:

"Multis ille bonis flebilis occidt——
————————cui Pudor, et Justitiæ soror
Incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas,
Quando ullum invenient parem?" HORAT.

THE END.

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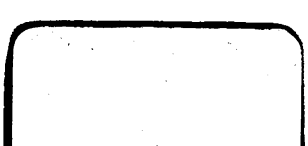
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